



Greetings to all our Sapper families and friends from Iraq. By the time this reaches you we should be well into the school year, with all the great seasonal activities of the fall; football, soccer, Halloween, etc. It may not feel exactly "fall like" in Iraq just yet not too many trees down here that change color, but the mornings at least are cooler now, and the edge is coming off the heat at mid-day. It won't be long before we'll all be "freezing" when it's only 85 degrees F! With fall comes another activity, at least this year, and that's elections. I encourage each and every one of you to exercise your rights as a US citizen and make your voice heard. Regardless of your personal choice, your choice only matters if you make your preference known at the ballot box. Please see the Rear Detachment Commanders or our installation voting officers if you need assistance. As for Iraq, we too are readying for elections, not ours, but Iraqi ones. Our primary mission right now is setting the conditions for a free, fair, and representative Iraqi national election in January. That will take a lot of work, both in security and physical structures. Engineers are playing a key role in these missions, as well as in accelerating the pace of reconstruction across the four provinces in 1st ID's sector. Through initiatives such as regional reconstruction conferences, Engineers in all our units are working side by side with Iraqi government officials, program managers from Baghdad, and local contractors to get things rolling. A huge accomplishment this month was the completion of the Tikrit Bridge, a joint effort between the Iraqi government, USAID, 1st ID Engineers and civilian contractors. We also stay quite busy making constant improvements on our base camps and force protection postures, as

well as continuous route clearance missions to find, destroy or prevent IEDs. I can't express how proud I am of the dedication and sacrifice of each and every member of the Engineer Team here in Iraq, and how equally proud and grateful I am for the patience, perseverance, and hard work of our Read Detachments and Family Members keeping things going in the rear while we focus on mission downrange. I recently had an opportunity during my R&R to visit with the FRG Steering Groups of both 9E and 82E, as well as the Engr Bde's meeting. It was very refreshing and reassuring, although not surprising, to see the level of activity, dedication, and courage that permeated each of these groups. You do us proud and have our eternal gratitude for all that you are doing to help make this overall mission a success. All I ask is that you continue what you are doing through the months ahead. We're more than half way through the deployment, but our return is still a bit off, so we all have to pace ourselves, while also not losing momentum. My best to each and every one of you; stay safe and please keep up all the great things you are doing!

**Respectfully,
Colonel Bill Haight
Devastator 6**